Vacant posts of ATCs

*237. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of posts sanctioned for Air Traffic Control (ATC) and the number of posts filled;

(b) how long these posts are vacant;

(c) the reasons for not fulfilment of those posts, if any; and

(d) the impact of such vacant posts on the working of ATC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The total number of posts sanctioned of Air Traffic Control (ATC) are - 1753 and the number of posts filled are 1322.

(b) More than half of the vacant posts are the newly created posts which are vacant from the date of creation *i.e.* 21.6.2005. Other vacancies are a few years old. Action has been taken to recruit 100 Air Traffic Controllers and advertisement for this has been issued.

(c) Occurence of vacancy and its filling up is a continuous process. The recruitment for these vacant positions was held up on account of procedural problems.

(d) In spite of constraints in filling up and manning of these posts on immediate basis, no adverse impact on operational safety is permitted.

Mid-term appraisal on foreign airlines operations

*238. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Planning Commission has suggested a review of a policy that debars foreign carriers from investing in domestic ones;

(b) if so, whether in the mid-term appraisal, FDI share has been raised to 49 per cent and foreign airlines are still debarred from equity participation in domestic air operations;

(c) what are the other suggestions made by the Planning Commission in their mid-term appraisal on foreign airline operations;

(d) whether Government have seriously considered to remove bar on foreign airlines in domestic sector; and

(e) if so, by what time a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has in November, 2004 raised the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limits in Air Transport Services (domestic airlines) as under:

- 49% through automatic route
- 100% by Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) through automatic route (no direct or indirect equity by foreign airlines is allowed)

(c) The Planning Commission has in mid-term appraisal of the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) stated that foreign airlines are still debarred from equity participation in domestic air transport operations. There is a case for reviewing this policy as operation of airlines requires expertise as much as it does capital.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Delay in allotment of PAN

†*239. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be please to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the delay occurring in the matter of allotting a Permanent Account Number (PAN);

(b) if so, what steps have been taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) the number of cities where computerised system is being used for allotting a Permanent Account Number (PAN) at present?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.